

Water

Water, water, everywhere! Few of us worry about getting enough water. When we are thirsty, we drink some fluid & forget about it. But behind the scenes, water is hard at work keeping body systems up & running. Every body cell, tissue, and organ needs water to function. In fact, water is the nutrient your body needs in the greatest amount. You could survive as long as six weeks without food, but you could not survive more than a week without water.

On average, an adult's body is made up of about 10-12 gallons of water (about 55-75% of body weight). An elderly person's body weight is only about half water.

Dehydration is one of the most frequent causes of hospitalization among people over age 65. What are the signs of dehydration? The effects of the body's loss of water are progressive: thirst, then fatigue, next weakness, followed by delirium and possibly death. Though dehydration typically won't happen over the course of a single day, it's important to pay attention to signals of water loss and minimize risk of dehydration by drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day- before thirst sets in.

The recommendation on water intake varies greatly depending on the climate which you live, the amount you exercise (and sweat), and your age. The most common quoted recommendation is 8 eight ounce glasses of water per day – but there are very limited resources to support that claim. However water is one of the best beverages to drink as it is cheap, fat free, sugar free, & calorie free! And you don't have to watch your portion size!

Bottled water is popular – more than half of us drink it. It's portable and it offers consistent taste. The taste of tap water can vary from place to place but is treated with fluoride, which helps maintain strong teeth and bones. Fortified waters contain additional vitamins and nutrients but remember that America is in a state of excess, not deficiency. If drinking alcoholic or caffeinated beverages, which have a diuretic effect and promote water loss, try alternating them with water or sparkling water at parties or social gatherings.

For additional program information, please contact Workforce Health at 262-257-4780 or email us at kcpeck@communitymemorial.com